Please amend the claims as follows.

A list of all claims is included below.

1.   (Previously Presented) A method for retrieving medical images from various sources and in different formats, to enable the creation of teaching files and research datasets, for the building of a personal medical image library, the method comprising:

(a) directly retrieving a plurality of medical images from various sources;

(b) storing the plurality of medical images in a database;

(c) generating a database record for the teaching files and research datasets;

(d) generating the teaching files and research datasets using at least one medical image of the plurality of medical images and additional information input by a user, the teaching files and research datasets being compliant with at least one predetermined schema;

(e) saving the teaching files and research datasets into the database;

(f) generating at least one index of the teaching files and research datasets; and

(g) automatically anonymizing patient identification data when the at least one medical image is retrieved from the various sources.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, further including a searching mechanism for searching the teaching files and research datasets.

3. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the medical images are from at least one discipline selected from the group consisting of: radiology, nuclear

medicine, dermatology, pathology, ophthalmology, cardiology, neurology, endoscopy, angiography, biomedicine, ECG, EEG, and EMG.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the method is in accordance with MIRC schema.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the patient sensitive information is not revealed publicly.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the patient identification data is able to be revealed to a generator of the teaching files and research datasets.

7. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the automatic anonymizing of patient identification data includes e replacing of each item of the patient identification data with an anonymization code.

8. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the anonymization code includes a prefix, a randomly generated number and a type.

9. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the prefix is a short string of characters representing the generator of the sensitive information; and the type represents nature of the sensitive information.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a check is first performed to determine if the item of sensitive information has previously been anonymized and the anonymization code previously generated; and, if yes, retrieving and using the previously generated anonymization code.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sensitive information includes one or more items selected from the group consisting of : patient's name, patient ID, other patient's names, other patient IDs, patient's birth name, patient's address, patient's telephone numbers, patient's mother's birth name, region of residence, country of residence, military rank, branch of service, patient comments, additional patient history, referring physician's name, referring physician's address, referring physician's telephone numbers, and all other person names.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein, in step (c), ACR codes are entered as a result of system prompts.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the ACR codes are used for the at least one index of the teaching files.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein indexing is by at least one selected from the group consisting of : title, abstract, keywords, authors, affiliations, contacts, patient information, radiological codes, image format, image compression status, image modality, anatomic location, and ACR codes.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein, for internal searching, patient sensitive information is revealed, and for external searching patient sensitive information is anonymized.

16. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein after each medical image is retrieved in step (a) it can be viewed before being stored.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein all medical images are kept in their original format once retrieved.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the formats include at least one selected from the group consisting of AVW, HDR/IMG (Analyze format version 8.0 and 7.5), BMP (Windows Bitmap format), DICOM (Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine), GIF, JPEG, JPEG 2000, PNG, PNM, PPG, RGB, RGBA, SGI, TIFF, AVW, HDR/IMG (Analyze format : version 8.0 and 7.5), Animated GIF, MIRA, Mut-sliced TIFF, MOV, AVI, MP3, RM, and Waveform for ECG, EEG, EMG.

19. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein for two-dimensional medical images, two additional JPEG images are generated for ease of browsing using a web browser ; and for other image formats, an additional thumbnail image is generated.

20. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the two additional JPEG images are of the same size as thumbnail images.

21. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for retrieving medical images from various sources and in various formats for creating at least one teaching file and research dataset; the apparatus comprising:

a database for storing the at least one teaching file and research dataset in a generated database record, an image retrieval interface configured to directly retrieve medical images from various sources and in different formats, an MIRC server configured to provide an MIRC file storage service for the database and for a user's machine automatically anonymizing patient identification data based upon the at least one medical image retrieved from the various sources, a graphic user interface for operation on a user's machine to communicate with the MIRC server; and

a web server to service requests from the graphic user interface.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the database is a relational database for storage of all required information, including : database tables; database indexes; database scripts; and pointers to the medical images, teaching files and research datasets.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the server serves requests received from a user via the graphic user interface on a user's machine; the graphic user interface being for providing access functions and file editing functions.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the image server includes at least one selected from the group consisting of : a two dimensional image loader, a three dimensional image loader, a multi-media loader and a telemetry loader.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein the two-dimensional image loader is for retrieving two-dimensional still images.

26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein the three-dimensional image loader is for retrieving three-dimensional still images.

27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein the multi-media loader is for retrieving multi-media files.

28. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein the telemetry loader is for retrieving telemetry data.

29. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the graphic user interface includes a PMIL client as a user interface able to run in a web browser or as a stand alone application on a user's machine, and provides MRIC editing functions.

30. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the server includes an MIRC storage for providing an MIRC file storage service for the database and for the user's machine.

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 30, wherein the MIRC server further includes an MIRC query to provide queries as defined by the MIRC scheme.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the at least one teaching file is in accordance with a Medical Imaging Resource Centre standard.

33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the formats include at least one selected from the group consisting of: AVW, HDR/IMG (Analyze format: version 8.0 and 7.5), BMP (Windows Bitmap format), DICOM (Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine), GIF, JPEG, JPEG 2000, PNG, PNM, PPG, RGB, RGBA, SGI, TIFF, AVW, HDR/IMG (Analyze format: version 8.0 and 7.5), Animated GIF, MIRA, Muti-sliced TIFF, MOV, AVI, MP3, RM, and Waveform for ECG, EEG, EMG.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein all medical images are kept in their original format once retrieved.

35. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 33, wherein for two-dimensional medical images, two additional JPEG images are generated for ease of browsing using a web browser; and for other image formats, an additional thumbnail image is generated.

36. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as claimed in claim 35, wherein the two additional JPEG images are of the same size as thumbnail images.

37. (Previously Presented) A computer useable medium comprising a computer program code that, when executed, is configured to control a computer processor to (a) retrieve medical images from various sources and in different formats; to enable the creation of teaching files and research datasets, for the building of a personal medical image library, by: directly retrieving a plurality of medical images from various sources; storing the plurality of medical images in a database; generating a database record for the teaching files and research datasets using at least one medical image of the plurality of medical images and additional information input by a user, the teaching files and research datasets being compliant with at least one predetermined schema;

saving the teaching files and research datasets into the database; generating at least one index of the teaching files and research datasets; and

automatically anonymizing patient identification data when the at least one medical image is retrieved from the various sources.